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to juvenile education and environment lends all its weight to this study of the poorly born and poorly fed. The imagination sickens at the pathetic tales of child woe concentrated in the twenty-three "Special Difficulty" schools with their roll of some 21,000 children, and at the thought of the more than 30,000 whose drink-sodden, lazy parents "will not be at the trouble to rise, give the children a meal, and send them off, willing or unwilling, until past the hour when the school doors are closed." Yet the dangers of the "free meal" and of other proposed remedies seem to be surpassed only by the dangers of no remedy at all.

Finally, as of flattery so it may be said of praise, the sincerest form is imitation. It is interesting, therefore, to observe the stimulus which the advent of these volumes has given to philanthropic research. The latest instance is to be found in the forthcoming study of the tenement houses of Boston by the Massachusetts Bureau of the Statistics of Labor. The report is based upon a house to house canvass of all tenement property in the city; and it is hoped in some measure to follow Mr. Booth's plan of illustration by colored maps. Such action by public bureaus is hopeful in the extreme; and there is reason to expect that official statistics may be supplemented by an organized effort to combine the energies and sympathetic observations of voluntary workers in charity organizations.

EDWARD CUMMINGS.

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STATE RAILROAD COMMISSIONS AND HOW THEY MAY BE MADE EFFECTIVE. By FREDERIC C. CLARK, Ph. D., Instructor in History and Political Economy, Ann Arbor High School. Publications of the American Economic Association, Vol. VI., No. 6. Baltimore: 1891. Pp. 110.

To the casual observer it might seem that the movement for State regulation of railways in the United States had come to a standstill. The Interstate Commerce Commission fails to make head against the opposition of the roads, the statutory limitations of its powers, and the recent adverse decisions of the Supreme Court. The State Boards are

hampered by the limited area over which they can severally exercise authority. While the State Commission system is known to be extending itself, yet there is on the part of many of the commissions a feeling of impotence and almost of despair.

It is, therefore, satisfactory to have the situation thoroughly reviewed, and the actual state of things more fully described than had been done until recently. Dr. Clark's monograph and a later article by Henry C. Adams in the *Century* afford substantial grounds for the belief that the "commission system" is not only susceptible of indefinite improvement, but that it is actually being improved, and that the present, instead of being a period of inactivity or retrogression is one of definite advance.

The descriptive portion of the monograph is summarized in five tables and a map. The tables give in a systematic way the salient facts regarding the regulation of railways in all the States and Territories in the Union, and the map indicates by variously colored areas the varying pressure of State laws upon the same railroad system. These tabular and graphic summaries make easily available the results of what must have been a very arduous and extended investigation. Dr. Clark's conclusion is that while there still prevails a great and mischievous amount of diversity among the various State systems of regulation, yet that there is a tendency towards uniformity and coöperation on the part of the several commissions. This is brought about by the mimetic instincts of the States which lead them to draft new legislation after some type already extensively adopted, and further from the conscious efforts of the commissioners, State and inter-state, to bring about greater uniformity in aims and methods.

Three conferences of railway commissioners have convened in Washington at which representatives of the Association of American Railway Accounting Officers were also present. Among the positive results brought about by these conferences is the increased number of States (29) that

now have a railroad fiscal year corresponding with that of the federal government, and the increased number (22) that now use the statistical blanks prepared for them by the inter-state commerce commission. The conferences have also stimulated the States in the tendency to copy the provisions of the federal law in their own statutes. In the opinion of Dr. Clark, the way to make State Railway Commissions effective is to encourage this tendency towards uniformity and towards coöperation on the part of the various commissions. He also believes in general in good salaries and long terms for the individual commissioners, and suggests a method of insuring a higher standard of individual efficiency by statutory provisions, prescribing certain essential qualifications for holding the office, and the insertion in the oath of office of a statement that such provisions have been complied with.

Much of the first fifty pages of monograph seems to have been put in for the sake of symmetry, and as it recounts matters that have been dwelt upon by previous writers it could have been abbreviated to advantage. In the only State with whose railroad legislation the present reviewer is thoroughly familiar, Dr. Clark makes a definite mistake in describing the constitution of the commission. He says that three State officials appoint three secretaries and the latter constitute the commission. As a matter of fact five State officials constitute the Board of Transportation, and this *ex-officio* board then chooses three salaried secretaries who do the routine work but have no authority.

A. G. WARNER.

Washington, D. C.

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER OF LABOR. 1890.
Cost of Production: Iron, Steel, Coal, etc. Pp. x and 1404. Wash-
ington: Government Printing Office, 1891.

This portly volume, of tables almost exclusively, is a veritable storehouse of information, authentic and detailed-